

Guidelines for Written Appeals University of California, Santa Cruz

Purpose

The appeal process exists to review the appropriateness of initial decisions. To that end, those appealing should have a defined purpose and rationale that is clearly articulated in their statement. The written statement should be firmly rooted in the grounds for appeal as outlined in the Appeal Request Cover Sheet and should be more than simply not liking the original decision or sanctions assigned.

Process

Following an initial review, the accused student may file a written appeal within five (5) working days of receipt of the Offer of Voluntary Resolution. The primary documents reviewed by the appeals officer are:

- The written decision and supporting documentation from the initial review;
- The Appeal Request Cover Sheet (must be submitted for appeal to be reviewed);
- The written appeal and any supporting documentation.

A written appeal should state clearly and specifically what change(s) the appellate officer is being asked to make. It is important to provide a supporting rationale for the requested change(s). That is, the written appeal must persuade the reviewer that the proposed modification(s) will result in a better decision than that made in the initial review.

After the appeal is submitted, the student will have the opportunity to meet with the appellate officer. While a meeting is not required, students can use this opportunity to expand on the information submitted in the written appeal. It is important to note that the written document will be the primary basis for the decision rendered by the appellate officer and should therefore be clear and complete.

Appeals are based on one or more specified grounds. Consequently, the written appeal should present compelling arguments that support the grounds for appeal. Note: **the appeal is not a rehearing of the case**, therefore it is important to focus on the point of the appeal and its grounds.

The appellant should remember that it is his/her burden to convince the appellate officer that the decision from the initial review should be modified. Toward that end, the appellant should be sure to address the main points made in the original written decision.

If supporting documentation is provided, an explanation of its importance should be provided in the written appeal. Documents already in the conduct file need not be resubmitted, but should be referenced if they contribute directly to the rationale stated in the appeal.

The appeals officer has the authority to uphold the original decision, increase the original sanctions, decrease the original sanctions, or drop the case. Decisions by the appellate officer represent the final level of appeal.